



AMENDMENT

In the claims:

Please amend claims 16 and 28 to read as follows:

16. (Amended) A method for detecting contamination by an amplicon from a previous amplification reaction, said method comprising the steps of:

conducting a control nucleic acid amplification reaction in a sample in a control sample comprising a nucleic acid template, using at least one primer that is capable of amplifying a detection sequence but not said template, said detection sequence having been incorporated in an amplicon of a previous amplification reaction conducted in a sample different from said control sample, using at least one chimeric primer comprising said detection sequence at a 5' end of said at least one chimeric primer; and

determining whether said sample has been contaminated by said previous amplification reaction by determining whether said control reaction produces an amplicon.

28. (Amended) A method for detecting contamination by an amplicon from a previous sample, said method comprising the steps of:

conducting an amplification reaction in a first nucleic acid sample, using at least one chimeric primer comprising a first portion that hybridizes with at least a portion of a target nucleic acid, the amplification of which is desired, and a second, contamination detection portion that does not hybridize with said target nucleic acid;

conducting a control amplification reaction in a second nucleic acid sample different from said first nucleic acid sample, using at least one primer to amplify specifically said contamination detection portion of said chimeric primer; and

determining whether said second sample has been contaminated by an amplicon from said first sample by determining whether said control reaction produces an amplicon.